

(Washington DC) This morning Congressman Charlie Gonzalez held a press conference to decry the cuts to child support enforcement in the Budget Reconciliation bill. The Republican controlled Congress finally passed this legislation on February 1st and the President signed it into law on February 8th. This legislation cuts funding for an array of vital services, but the net cut for child payment enforcement reduces funding by \$1.5 billion.

As a result, states will have fewer resources for a variety of functions vital to ensuring that child support payments are made. The ultimate reduction in child support collection will hinge on whether states decide to make up this funding shortfall. Estimates range from \$4.9 to \$8.55 billion.

"It is only fair and right that non-custodial parents meet their financial and legal responsibility to their children," said Congressman Gonzalez. "Cutting the funds to enforce child support will hurt numerous children in our community. Last fall, the Attorney General's office released figures showing that 100,000 families in San Antonio received more than \$188 million due them. I am sure that that money was very much needed in those households.

It is inconceivable to me that Republicans would cut funds for such a necessary program. This is an issue of fundamental fairness and decency. Because this will let many working families slip into poverty, they will be forced to rely on state social services. The Attorney General's office calculated that Texas will have to pay an extra \$1.85 billion for food stamps, Medicaid and assistance for needy families."